Nacton C of E Primary School
Headteacher: Mrs Gemma Taylor

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Dear parent/carer,

RE: Introducing Our Pastoral Team

Nacton has always had a strong provision for children who need additional support with their social, emotional and mental health. Much of this I believe springs out of our church school ethos which promotes a deep commitment to nurturing and developing the whole child beyond just academic success.

Many of you will be familiar with the work of Mrs Walker who has a great deal of expertise in this area. Mrs Walker is an experienced Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and we are very lucky to have her on staff. To further strengthen and develop Mrs Walker's work, we are welcoming Mrs Akers to form part of our new pastoral team. Mrs Akers has just started her training to become fully qualified Thrive practitioner. This is a really exciting development for the school. The work of the team will be overseen by Mrs Lummis our new SENCO and myself.

What is ELSA?
ELSA stands for Emotional Literacy Support Assistant. This is a role in school that helps children and young people understand and manage their emotions. ELSAs are teaching assistants who have received specialized training and ongoing supervision from educational psychologists.


Mrs Walker

ELSAs work with children in small groups or one-on-one to help them:

- Recognize and manage their feelings
- Understand and manage anger
- Build self-esteem
- Develop social and friendship skills
- Cope with loss and bereavement


Mrs Akers

What is Thrive?
Thrive is a whole school approach. It is a specific way of working with all children that helps to develop their social and emotional wellbeing, enabling them to engage with life and learning. It supports them in becoming more self-assured, capable and adaptable. It can also address any troubling behaviours providing a firm foundation for academic attainment.

This year, we will start using a screening tool and activity planning resource called Thrive-Online. This allows us to check that all our children are

working appropriately for their age and to develop the whole class with activities that ensure that they are as emotionally and socially supported as they can be. Using Thrive-Online will also identify any children in need of extra help enabling us to provide a more detailed assessment to develop an action plan that gives specific strategies and activities for supporting your child within our school. This will also include activities that you can do at home.

More information about this process will become available when we are further along the implementation journey.

What about Eager Beavers?
In the future, support previously provided to some children through the Eager Beavers programme will be replaced by ELSA or Thrive support. This will give us greater capacity to meet the growing needs of our children and provide a whole school approach which will benefit everyone. These sessions will be delivered by both Mrs Akers as our new Thrive practitioner and Mrs Walker as our ELSA.

Please be reassured that ongoing support from Mrs Walker is continuing this term for children who previously benefited from eager beavers while we begin our Thrive journey.

If you feel your child would benefit from ELSA support or Thrive do initially bring this to the attention of your child's class teacher.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss with me directly, please feel free to get in touch. My door is always open.

Kind regards,

Gemma Taylor
Headteacher